

Reviews

WOMEN IN ANTARCTICA

WOMEN ON THE ICE. Chipman, E. R. 1986. Carlton, Melbourne University Press. 224 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-522-8432497. Aus\$28.50

Elizabeth Chipman's book provides a long awaited recognition of the contribution made by women in exploration, exploitation and scientific research in Antarctica. Drawing on her own experiences in the Antarctic, her book analyses how women see themselves and are seen by others on the continent. The book avoids a monotonous listing of names, dates and places by providing illustrations and extracts from the diaries, journals and letters of the women involved. *Women on the ice* not only provides fascinating reading for those interested in the Antarctic, but also documents in a concise and readable manner a unique perspective of the contribution made by women to current Antarctic knowledge.

Chipman's book traces the development of the women's role from that of 'mere' companion of sailors, sealers and whalers in the 18th and 19th centuries, to a present day acceptance in the Far South as regular and active members of scientific and professional groups. It places their achievements, until now undervalued and mostly ignored, against the background of the popular history of Antarctica. As Chipman herself says, 'Most of the women in the Antarctic today are there because of a sense of adventure or because they have a job to do, or both'. She continues by pointing out that 'It will soon be taken as a matter of course that women shall work alongside men in the Antarctic as they do elsewhere on our Earth and in space'.

The whole volume has been extremely well researched and produced. Of particular interest to the lay reader are the two appendices. The first contains interviews with some of the women who have had recent experience in the Far South. The second provides an international chronology of all women who have ventured to the Antarctic continent and sub-Antarctic islands.

Undoubtedly this book makes a significant contribution to an area neglected by Antarctic literature. *Women on the ice* provides both enjoyable and stimulating reading. It also provokes a number of key questions concerning the role of women in the Antarctic today. Why are there so few women working in Antarctica? To what extent are women discouraged from participating in Antarctic projects? Can the recruitment methods of particular governments and polar institutes be considered discriminatory? Who monitors and is held accountable for recruitment procedures employed by these bodies? Hopefully this book will provide the necessary incentive for future research into many of these areas. (Mary Lowthian, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER)

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE EASTERN ARCTIC

PREHISTORY OF THE EASTERN ARCTIC. Maxwell, M. S. 1985. Orlando FL, Academic Press (New World Archaeological Record). 327 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-12-481270-8. £44.00, US\$52.00.

To synthesise 4000 years of prehistory of an area encompassing several million square kilometres is a decidedly difficult task, especially when attempting to accommodate both the critical professional archaeologist on the one hand, and the interested non-specialist on the other. Moreau S. Maxwell, one of the foremost figures in Arctic archaeology for the last quarter-century, has accomplished this, and more. The book is a delight to read,

in that it is not only a competent, well-written synthesis, but also in that Maxwell, through anecdotes and his own brand of humour, shares his unique insight into the physical conditions of the Arctic, and the human qualities of its prehistoric inhabitants. It is undoubtedly the most important source book for Eastern Arctic prehistory to appear to date.

A brief introductory section deals with the present physical and biological setting, and the paleoecology and paleoclimatology of the last 4000 years. This is followed by a section dealing with the origins of pioneering Paleoeskimo groups, in which such aspects as points of origin, causes and rates of initial colonization, and socio-economic conditions are addressed. The principal chapters of the book follow, and deal with the identification of the earliest Paleoeskimo cultures in the eastern Arctic (Independence I and early Pre-Dorset), and thereafter the discussion and interpretation of various hunting, domestic, and magico-religious activities, and temporal and regional variability, in Pre-Dorset, Dorset, and Thule cultures respectively.

While the book presents a summary of the current data base, and detailed statements on the history of Arctic archaeological research and major interpretive trends therein, it also in many respects goes beyond a synthesis. In particular, it provides a forum for Maxwell to present his own view of Arctic cultural development, in which the general conservatism in technology, ideology, and subsistence-settlement systems during the 4000 years of human occupation is seen within the context of cultural systems in balanced equilibrium. This theme provides a common link throughout the chapters in the book. The concept is attractive in its explanatory value, and while beyond the scope of the book, a demonstration of the precise articulation between archaeological remains as traditionally excavated and reported and various cultural systematic processes would have been intriguing.

Many Arctic archaeologists will find a number of the statements and interpretations challenging, and indeed they are so intended: as Maxwell remarks in the preface, 'Not the least of my intentions is to provide a target for the lances and harpoons of my colleagues, who will hurl their own interpretations of what happened in the past'. There is little doubt, however, that Maxwell will answer these challenges as ably as he has answered those in the past.

The book is very well illustrated but unfortunately many of the plates have been poorly reproduced—inexcusable given the price of the book. Otherwise, it is handsomely produced, with clear, sharp print, very few typographical errors and a useful index. (J. M. Savelle, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Cambridge CB2 1ER)

NORTHERN STUDIES IN CANADA

ARCTIC HERITAGE: PROCEEDINGS OF A SYMPOSIUM. Nelson, J. G., Needham, R. and Norton, L. (editors). 1987. Ottawa, ACUNS. 653 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-969-0987-9-0. Can\$27.50

The Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS) provides a forum for the Arctic and sub-Arctic interests of 35 Canadian universities, maintaining an office in Ottawa and promoting northern scholarship through education, professional and scientific training and research. This volume is one manifestation of ACUNS activity; it reports an interdisciplinary symposium on ecological planning and management aspects of Arctic Heritage use, held in Banff, Alberta, August 24–28 1985. Sponsored jointly by ACUNS and the IUCN commissions on Ecology and National Parks and Protected